

**What is Claimed is:**

1. A method for treating or preventing skeletal muscle atrophy in a subject comprising administering to the subject a composition comprising Bowman-Birk Inhibitor or a derivative thereof.

5

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the composition is administered orally.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the composition is administered as a dietary supplement.

10

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the composition comprises Bowman-Birk Inhibitor Concentrate.

15

5. A method for improving skeletal muscle function in a subject comprising administering to the subject a composition comprising Bowman-Birk Inhibitor or a derivative thereof.

20

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the composition is administered orally.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the composition is administered as a dietary supplement.

25

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the composition comprises Bowman-Birk Inhibitor Concentrate.

9. The method of claim 5 wherein improved skeletal muscle function comprises increased muscle strength or increased muscle mass.

30

10. A method for treating or preventing skeletal muscle degeneration in a subject comprising administering to the subject a composition comprising Bowman-Birk Inhibitor or a derivative thereof.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the composition is administered orally.

20

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the composition is administered as a dietary supplement.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein the composition comprises Bowman-Birk  
5 Inhibitor Concentrate.

14. A method for alleviating symptoms or slowing disease progression in a subject  
suffering from a degenerative skeletal muscle disorder or disease comprising  
administering to the subject a composition comprising Bowman-Birk Inhibitor or a  
10 derivative thereof.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the composition is administered orally.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the composition is administered as a dietary  
15 supplement.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the composition comprises Bowman-Birk  
Inhibitor Concentrate.

20 18. The method of claim 14 wherein the degenerative skeletal muscle disorder  
or disease is muscular dystrophy, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, spinal muscle atrophy or  
spinal cord injury.

25